A DIALOGUE BETWEEN A Protestant AND An {Ana} Baptist.

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With Allowance.

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BIBLIOTECA BODLEIANA

A Dialogue between a *Proteſtant* and an (*Ana*) *Baptiſt*.

Proteſtant Reader,

SInce the growth of Popery is much diſcours'd of, I hope it will not be impertinent to diſcover the great Progreſs it hath had under a new Maſk, amongſt ſome people called *(ana) Baptiſts*, in the Eaſt, South, and Weſt parts of *England*; which I ſhall endeavour to ſhew by way of Dialogue between a Popiſh *(ana) Baptiſt*, an uncontroulable Head of his Faction, and a *Proteſtant*, who for many years has by them been Excommunicated meerly for juſtifying and obtaining a legal Patent from the Kings moſt Excellent Majeſty; and after ſeveral Appeals from time to time to their Courts and Aſſemblies for Juſtice, hath found the ſaid Popiſh *(ana) Baptiſt* ſupported and protected, and his Sentence not to be reverſt.

Anabaptiſt. Haſt thou found me, O mine Enemy? Six years haſt thou been an Aſſerter of the Prerogative and Authority of the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*, and the Priviledges of his Subjects againſt the Authority and Power of the Heads of our *Infallible* Tribe of *Levi*; and for this thy derogating from us, we did moſt ſolemnly excommunicate thee ſix years ſince: and therefore I admoniſh thee to repent of all thy Acts of Diſobedience committed againſt our own Precepts, and of all thy endeavours to bring our ſelf to Juſtice, or elſe our Sentence ſhall never be reverſt.

Proteſtant. How may I know, that your ſelves do believe that you are Infallible?

Anabapt. Wherefore did we excommunicate thee, if we did not believe that we were Infallible? What need I declare it in words, when by our moſt ſolemn Actions it doth ſo plain appear? Witneſs our aforeſaid Sentence againſt thee; which was pronounced *before it was proved, That any known Law of God, the King, or the Church, nay of any other Pope beſides our ſelf, was tranſgreſt by thee, but onely becauſe thou wouldeſt not believe and obey what we command*. In a word, either we believe we are infallible, and therefore cannot err, or otherwiſe (did we not believe this) we then were more barbarous than the moſt unmerciful, cruelleſt, bloodieſt heathen-tyrants that ever were in the world. And though our ſelf be void of Charity, yet we hope thou haſt more Charity than to believe us to be ſuch. Now then we will aſſure thee, that thou mayſt conclude, that we believe that our ſelf is Infallible, and cannot Err; and conſequently thou muſt alſo believe, that whom we binde on Earth, is in like manner bound in Heaveu: Therefore we admoniſh thee to repent of all thou haſt done in oppoſition to our Holineſs, and publiſh thy Recantation of all that thou haſt ſaid or done againſt our ſelf and our Confederates; otherwiſe we will never forgive thee.

Proteſt. I pray tell me, Doth the power lie in your ſelf, or in the Confederates, whom you call the Church?

Anabapt. Doſt thou not know, that thoſe under my Government may not, but on pain of Excommunication, oppoſe our Will? Witneſs our verbal Declaration touching this Caſe, *viz*. That *the very name of a Patent was odious*; and that if thou didſt perſiſt (though in doing that which was lawful) thou ſhould

ſhouldſt be excommunicated: and that whoever ſhould take thy part, ſhould ſuffer the like Judgment. And did I not ſilence ſuch as would have ſhewed their diſlike of our proceedings againſt thee, ſaying, *Brother C. if you do not deſiſt, you may expect to be ſeverely dealt with?* What then is more plain, than that the Ruling and Corrective Power is in our ſelf? What though, to magnifie this my own uncontroulable Power to the Contempt of the Royal Prerogative, our ſelf have declared, *That Patents are ſo odious, that we could as freely have communion with any Idolater, or unclean perſon, as with one that ſhould have a Patent?* that is to ſay in plain Engliſh, Our ſelf can as freely lie with a Whore, and fall down and worſhip an Idol-god, as to have a Patent of the King. Now ſhould any under my Government deny any my Leige-Subjects the priviledge of our favour in ſuch an imperious manner as I have done thee, the ſame had been a moſt inſufferable Crime, as bad as thine own; and then they ſhould be excommunicated for not allowing and maintaining of that very thing for which we have excommunicated thee: ſo that the damnableneſs of the Crime is this, *viz.* An oppoſition made againſt our ſelf, though no tranſgreſſion beſides be proved, as our dealings with thee do witneſs. All which conſider'd, thou mayſt ſafely conclude, that the uncontroulable Power is in our ſelf, and that my Church (as we call it) are like ſo many Zealots led by the noſe, with each one a Rod in their hands to bring up the Rear, if any ſhould hang off. Methinks 'tis pleaſant to conſider how zealouſly they are devoted to my ſervice; witneſs the Zeal of him who being aſkt the queſtion (immediately after I had excommunicated thee) as they were going from the Meeting, *what he thought on't, and whether he did believe that Patents are ſuch dangerous things? I profeſs*, anſwered he, *I can as freely ſteal an horſe as have a Patent.* Pray tell me, doth not this argue abundance of courage and reſolution to maintain my Deſigne? for elſe he would not adventure his Soul (yea neck and all) for the ſupport of my Government, rather than incur my diſpleaſure; which undoubtedly they dreadmore than the diſpleaſure of God or the King, as ſuch Expreſſions do plainly demonſtrate. But further, beſides this particular inſtance, 'tis evident that all my whole Church are as zealouſly affected in this matter, as that one perſon; otherwiſe they would never give their conſent ſo inconſiderately to damn thee, (ſo far as it lay in their power) becauſe thou wouldſt not believe as our ſelf believed, and do as our ſelf commanded; not becauſe that they knew that the thing in it ſelf was evil: witneſs the Saying of him to whom thou thy ſelf didſt put this queſtion, *Art thou offended with me becauſe I juſtifie the obtaining of his Majeſties Letters-Patent? How, I*, ſaid he, *I know not what a Patent is, nor what it means.* Yet was it not in this mans power to oppoſe me: nay, *he was as zealous againſt thee as any.*

Proteſt. But is it not a dangerous thing thus to contemn his Majeſties Royal Prerogative, and to abridge the Priviledge of his Leige-Subjects?

Anabapt. Thou thick-ſcull'd dull-beetle! here is a Myſtery: I to ſcape the Rod of Juſtice, do publiſh and declare, That we own the Prerogative and Laws of the Supream Magiſtrate, and that no perſon ought to contemn it; that is to ſay, between me and thee, it is an evil to be corrected in him that contemns the ſame before our ſelf do call it in queſtion, and do contemn it firſt: but if a man contemn the ſame Laws and Royal Prerogative, and trample them under their feet, 'tis a vertue when our ſelf have *declared them to be odious and abominable*, &c. 'tis no longer any Crime, but a Vertue and piece of holy Zeal: The Laws are to be obey'd by thoſe under the Law; but our Subjects are under the

Grace and Power of our self. This is our opinion; witness our Declaration, saying, *If there be a Law to justifie Patents, what is that to us? what have we to do with the Laws of men?* And why so? we are Infallible, and therefore *our Laws and Precepts are to be obey'd upon pain of Excommunication:* And therefore those of our Subjects who regard the Laws or Royal Prerogative of the Supream Magistrate, when we have declar'd them *to be odious and abominable*, are guilty of Treason and Petty Blasphemy against our Mightiness, and may expect the same punishment as thy self.

Protest. Since you are Infallible, why may you not as well inflict the most cruel Corporal punishment, as well as the other?

Anabapt. There's nothing so necessary; but the unhappiness is, we want the opportunity. True it is, 'tis as lawful to burn a man for not obeying us, as it is *to send him to Hell for not believing and doing as we would have him*, since it is so, *that neither God nor the King requir'd it.* Howbeit, since yet we want that power, we are forc'd to be content with Excommunicating; which is in effect to say, God damn ye, the Devil take thee, and the Torments of Hell be thy Portion, if thou wilt not submit to our pleasure.

Protest. Most terrible! I now believe that you believe you are infallible, or otherwise that you are worse than the worst of the most cruel Heathen-tyrants; but in this Case I want Charity, a thing I would borrow of you. Howbeit, Peace and Reconciliation, according to Honesty, Truth, and Justice, I desire to obtain. If I submit and publish my Recantation, what then will your Holiness do for me?

Anabapt. Come, come, my dear Child, do as I have desired you, and I will promote ye unto honour: I like this first motion well, to wit, Peace and Reconciliation; but as for Honesty, Truth, and Justice, 'tis vain to talk of them: thou knowest *they are banisht our Supream Courts in spight of thee and all those that contend for them.* I thought after *six years attendance, and frustrated endeavours there*, thou mightest have learnt more wit than to expect any such out-of-fashion Vertues amongst us.

Protest. 'Tis true, Great Sir! I was to blame for my Credulity, which indeed was my greatest Folly; and what you have said, makes me believe you therein are Infallible: for it's true to a tittle.

Anabapt. Infallible! there is no Honour on the Earth comparable unto it; and I am in the way above all the *Baptists* in the world to be exalted on the highest Throne; yea, and thou hast been an Instrument thereof, as I will tell thee, if thou wilt be reconciled: be but reconciled, I say, and I will promote thee to Honour. Thou hast been a fool to oppose me all this while; *Thou contendest for Justice, but alas! 'tis Interest, not Justice governs our Courts.* Follow thou me, *Am not I crept out of a Gentlemans Kitchin to be great and famous all over the Nation?* Come, let me be *Boniface*, and thou shalt be *Phocas*; onely so it shall be, that I will be Supream and uncontroulable in Church and State.

Protest. What hopes are there, that the *Baptists* will own and follow you, if you publickly embrace the *Romish* Fundamental Principles, since it is so, that you then must renounce your present practice of Dipping Believers, and betake your self to Sprinkling of Infants, and plead your Infallibility for Rule? I would not trouble your Holiness with impertinent Questions, but do believe if you can nick them in this, the work may be easily effected.

Anabapt. I will tell thee, that mighty Obstruction is already removed, as thus:

Our

Our present Foundation for Church-Government is Infallibility (or Tyranny, one of the two.) As for plain Scripture-proof, which was our old Foundation (as we did pretend) it's turned topsie-turvy. This, I say, we have thrust head and shoulders out of doors, though they take no notice of it. As for Example: we have (if thou dost not submit to our self) shut thee out of Heaven, and sent thee to Hell, without one plain Text of Scripture to prove our practice lawful. May I not plead with my Brethren from this precedent hereafter, that 'tis as lawful to sprinkle Infants without plain Text of Scripture, as without plain Text to Excommunicate persons? Prethee, what can they say for themselves? Moreover, I prevail'd with them in this case, to do as we would have them, by Flattery and the Art of Wheedling. But now if they will not come roundly on, I'll drive them with a Whip and a Bell. And why not? For true it is, If they refuse to act without Scripture to please us now, it's a meer piece of stubborn obstinacy; I need say no more, the Case is plain. And we remember Mr. *J. G.* in great discontent put this Question to our self, touching thy Case, saying, How dare you do such a thing, not having one Word of God for it? But alas, he little thought we were got so high above it. But I'll not say one word more, till I know thee to be reconciled to me, and then thou shalt be next in Dignity to our self.

Protest. O brave we! I am now for Interest: and I must declare unto you, that my desire is, that it may be done to you according to the advice of your dear friend *Haman*, concerning the man whom the King delighteth to honour.

Anabapt. Now am I glad to hear thee so compliant and well-wishing to our Designe, which let it be Divine or Diabolical, by Truth, by Lies, by Dishonesty, by Hypocrisy, thou knowest I can improve all these expedients to maintain and defend it.

Protest. I believe that herein you are most Infallib'e: but pray how is it that I have been a means to promote your greatness, so as to bring you more near the Throne than you were?

Anabapt. Ha, ha, he! My Child! I cannot but laugh to see how I have outwitted not onely thee, but even the General-Assembly too, to whom thou hast these five years made thy Appeal for Justice against me; but instead of correcting of us according to Justice, they have given their Power to our self, and have thereby made us absolute supream and uncontroulable, to such a degree, that none may dare to oppose or compare with our self.

Protest. I pray how doth this appear?

Anabapt. That will I tell thee. After they had vouched my Lies and Dishonesty, by which they express their zeal to my promotion and thy disgrace, they also confess, that by reason of *IGNORANCE*, they are not able to judge of the Controversie, and therefore refer it to our self; making our self the Judge, and our Fellow-Criminals the Jury: Which they would never do, did they not believe, that our self and our Abettors were more infallible in Knowledge and Judgment than themselves. Now mark what I say, to the intent thou mayst know that our self have got the Supreme Head-ship, which had hardly been, if it had not been for thee; as thus appears.

First, Thou madest thy Appeal to the General-Assembly of the Messengers and Elders of the *Baptist* Congregations from most parts of the Nation, which Assembly was their highest Court before they gave the pre-eminence to our self: Now we do believe, That of all the Nations in the World, *England* is endued with

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the greateſt meaſure of Chriſtian Light and Knowledge. *Secondly*, That the *Baptiſts* of our own perſuaſion are the only truly Qualified Churches of God in *England*. *Thirdly*, That thoſe who are qualified, and ſet apart by God and the Church, are moſt fit to Rule and Govern. *Fourthly*, That this Aſſembly, which conſiſts of perſons thus qualified (as they believe they are) having a Caſe before them ſo great, as that Damnation doth depend thereon; and they themſelves do confeſs and acknowledge, That by reaſon of Ignorance, they are not able to make Judgment (notwithſtanding they are the higheſt Court) and therefore did refer it to our ſelf; and ſo made our ſelf and our Abettors Judges in our own Caſe; which they could not honeſtly do, did they not believe, That our Honeſty, Knowledge, *&c.* did excel their own, as aforeſaid. Who then, my Childe, but our ſelf, moſt fit to be exalted on the higheſt Throne, to ſway the Scepter of *Univerſal* Government? And by what Authority can this Councel or Aſſembly pretend to oppoſe the Wiſdome and Acts of him, to whom they have given their Power and Supremacy? And now ſuppoſe the Sword were but wreſted out of the hand of the Tribe of *Judah*; is it not plain there were great probability of our obtaining the Kingdome?

Proteſt. Now we are ſo far reconciled, let us be free and familiar; and pray tell me, When you paſt the Sentence of Excommunication, did you not play the Hypocrite?

Anabapt. O yes moſt deeply: Doſt not thou remember, how I lamented thy condition moſt bitterly, when I curſed thee to the Devil moſt ſolemnly? Yea, I acted my Hypocriſie with ſuch Devotion, that the Tears dropt from the eyes of many; wherein nothing is more true, than that I *mockt* God, *profaned* his Sacred Ordinance, and *diſſembled* with my Brethren. But alas! He that will uſurp Authority over Church and State, can do no leſs.

Proteſt. But what ſhall we do with thoſe who are for the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*, and declare that the Tribe of *Levi* hath not to do to Judge and Condemn their Laws, nor Prerogative; or to deſtroy any Subjects Priviledges, *&c.* who alſo do oppoſe the Authority of that Reſult, by which you were made Judge in your own Caſe?

Anabapt. A *Smithfield* take take them; but let me alone with them, and according to my Advice do thou act; be ſure let none of them know we are reconciled, and we ſhall catch them napping, I mean the *Proteſtant-Baptiſts*: The Plot is already laid, I will tell thee how.--- Thou knowſt the laſt Aſſembly was (by our Providence) confounded in all they did; Some cry'd, *Lo here is Chriſt*, and ſome, *Lo there*; but I and my Abettors ordered the matter ſo, that they confeſt, God was not amongſt them: wherefore under pretence to reform the matter, and to conſider what Expedients may be moſt neceſſary for the carrying on this hopeful Reformation now begun, twleve perſons only were appointed to meet at *Whitſontide*, 1678. Now mark, the whole Nation is divided into three Aſſociations, or Dioceſſes; two parts of theſe three are on my ſide, ſo that our ſelf ſhall have eight againſt four, and one of theſe four is my principal Factor, and hath gain'd me more Proſelytes than any: Thou ſhalt ſee, I my ſelf ſhall be one of this new-faſhioned *Jury of Judges*; and thoſe who are known to be my Abetters and Defenders, they with me ſhall ſit as Judges; and to be ſure we ſhall out-vote our Antagoniſts; and if they will not ſubmit to our Government, we will caſt them out of our Synagogue, and then by Libelling reproachful Accuſations render them odious to the world. And if

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thou wilt but act a part alſo amongſt Perſons of Quality, according as thou art acquainted with many of them, with whom on this precious Deſigne, I will give thee leave to keep company, though formerly I have forbidden it upon other civil occaſions: If thou wilt but do ſo, I ſay, no body then will believe theſe men thou ſpeakeſt of, though their Complaints be moſt juſt. This is my method, thou knoweſt by Experience; but I charge thee, as thou deſireſt our Bleſſing and dreadeſt our Curſe, that thou believe and obey me, and be as mad againſt all my Oppoſers, as I and all my Confederates have been againſt thee; ſo ſhalt thou be certain to be promoted unto Honour, even to be our Principal Secretary immediately.

Proteſt. But there's a little tender thing called Conſcience, that checks and curbs me ſo, that I know not what to do in this caſe.

Anabapt. Conſcience! Debauch it, debauch it: Thou knoweſt I have ſo throughly debaucht the Conſcience of our ſelf, that I can tell Lies of my own inventing, and diſhoneſtly murder the Reputation of the Godly, ſeduce and corrupt Witneſſes, diſſemble and play the Hypocrite with pleaſure; and immediately Preach down Sin, and pray as devoutly as the greateſt Preciſian of them all.

Proteſt. I know that in ſuch caſes you are an Infallible Doctor: But what ſhall I do, that am but a weak Brother, and every day attended with ſuch ſtrong oppoſition, that I cannot overcome Conſcience? will you be angry with me, becauſe I am not you equal?

Anabapt. I tell thee Childe, If thou doſt not debauch thy Conſcience, thou wilt never be able to do as I would have thee.

Proteſt. Sir! I know that I told one Lie, but a little while ſince; ought I not to repent thereof?

Anabapt. Repent! What matters that; never grieve thy ſelf, if thy Lie has done thee any ſervice. But what was it?

Proteſt. If it ſhall pleaſe your HOLINESS, when to make you believe I was Reconciled, I told you, I would that it might be done to thee, as to the Man whom the King delighted to honour; my meaning was, that rather than thou ſhouldſt attain to thy uſurped unlimited Power, thou ſhouldſt be exalted as *Haman* was, at leaſt 50 Cubits higher than thy Brethren.

Anabapt. Oh thou dreaming Lump of Subtlety, My Curſe and Sentence of Excommunication againſt thee ſhall never be reverſt; I am as reſolute in the caſe as *Muggleton*; I have decreed it in contempt of the Laws and Prerogative of the Tribe of *Judah*; and whoever are thy Abettors may expect the ſame puniſhment.

Proteſt. What is your Sentence of Excommunication? that I may conſider how ill my Caſe is.

Anabapt. Ha, Ha, 'Tis no ſmall Curſe; but God damn thee, the Devil take thee to all Eternity, that's thy Portion, if thou doſt not ſubmit to the Precepts of our own preſcribing: Our ſelf and Confederates have already declared it, and ſolemnly have done our parts to have it ſo; & all the Aſſemblies thou haſt Appealed to, are ſo zealous for our Government, that not one of them hath Reverſt it.

Proteſt. Notwithſtanding your unmerciful Decree, it is indeed far from me to deſire that thou ſhouldſt be thus miſerable, no nor yet be exalted above thy Confederates, as *Haman* thy dear Brother was; but rather that we may be reconciled in Chriſtian Love and Friendſhip. Let me therefore intreat thee, my unkinde Friend, to acknowledge thy Wickedneſs, and publiſh thy Repentance

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and Reformation, and give satisfaction? Do but this, and I do promise thee, thou shalt never be committed into the Goalers hands. If thou do but confess thy Debt, and pay but what thou art able. Nay, I will, rather than fail, forgive thee part of what thou hast to pay me; I will not leave thee without Money, upon condition thou wilt do but what is thy Duty. Pray despise not my Christian intreaty: Do but consider, If God should deal with you for the Sin which thou hast committed against him, as thou wouldst I should be punisht for doing that against thy will, which is no Sin, what then would become of thee.

Anabapt. Dost thou not know that I have again and again been admonisht by several Elders? whose Christian Advice I have contemn'd; and why shouldst thou not cease to admonish me, O thou whom my Soul hateth? Dost not thou know that thy labour is in vain, and that thou wert as good cast thy Pearls to Swine? Put case the whole Assembly of Elders doth admonish me, why should I regard them? They know the greatest part of them have taken my part so long, that God is not amongst them (as themselves confess:) They have accounted me most Worthy, and made me Judge above themselves: So that I am Supream, and they are all under me, as Tenants at the will of the Lord.

Protest. Pray Sir, be not so passionate; I do assure you I long to be at peace with you. Pray let us agree to make our Appeals to an Assembly of twenty *Baptists*, who are not Parties and known Defenders of your self and Cause, to be Conven'd on this very purpose; and let them judg whether I have not offered you very fair, and who is most to be blamed; that so we may come to a Right understanding.

Anabapt. Away, away, no Appeals from the most Infallible Supream Judge: I will never suffer our self to be corrected by any Court in the world. The Authority of Judgment is removed from the Tribe of *Judah* to our Tribe of *Levi*, and they have given it to me: Therefore whoever will take upon him to judge our self, are Usurpers and Enemies to our Crown and Dignity.

Protest. But, pray Sir, how doth it appear in your own judgment, that the Authority of Government is removed from the Lions of *Judah*, and placed on you? for if it be not true, you may sit besides the Cushion, and be corrected by the Rod of Justice.

Anabapt. How long wilt thou grieve our Soul? thou talkest like a dunce. Dost thou not believe that we, the Heads of the Tribe of *Levi*, are Infallible? How then is it possible for them to be Usurpers, Rebels, or Traytors worthy of punishment? nay more, though they should poyson all the Lions of the Tribe of *Judah* with one Posset, yet they cannot err therein: Though 'tis true 'tis a Crime in *Simeon* to do it without our License, yet know 'tis a Vertue in *Levi*, or any other that doth it at our Request. Did I not tell you we justified both the Law, Prerogative, and Authority of the Lion, and say it's unlawful for any to contemn the same, before it be call'd in question and condemn'd by our self? and when our self have condemn'd the Authority aforesaid, no man may justifie it, but on peril and pain of Excommunication: Witness thy own Case.

Protest. As I have found thee an Infallible Promoter of *Popery*, in Contemning Authority, Acting without Scripture-Rule, Condemning because one will not believe and do as you do, without any Proof or Scripture for it; pretending to Infallibility, *&c.* or worse than the most barbarous Heathen-tyrants: And seeing that thou hatest to be reformed, I shall at present leave thee to thy Tutor, desiring thy Reformation.

Now, Reader, be not too censorious, I have not done this thing rashly: Take notice, that I have according to their own allowance, Methods, and Impositions, made my Appeal to the General Assembly, &c. several times for Justice against this grand Popish (ana) Baptist, *by name* Matthew Cuffyn, *and have offered to prove at every Assembly, That the substance of all that I have asserted as to matter of fact against him, is true. And notwithstanding the said several General Assemblies of his own perswasion have met in* London *every year, under pretence to Reform Errours and Redress Grievances, yet the said Popish Faction being increasing, doth outvote the Protestant Party, and maintains and defends the same, and will not suffer Justice to do her office, nor permit the Sentence to be Reverst: all which I am ready to prove in any Court in* England. *As for the whole General Assembly, whether any be Opposers of the Growth of Popery, I will not determine, but leave the Innocent to clear themselves by publishing their Testimony to the discovering the Truth of the matter, according as it hath come to their knowledge, and accordingly separate from them on this very Consideration; which by so doing may be a Demonstration that they are free from the guilt of this dangerous and insufferable Usurpt Authority. In the mean time their Expressions of dislike may be judged but Hypocritical Pretences, and consequently themselves (according to our vulgar Proverb) as deep in the Durt as the other in the Mire: Onely this I can say and affirm, That Mr.* Gosnail, *Mr.* Plant, *Mr.* Kiffin, *Mr.* Hicks, *and many more in City and Country, who are unconcern'd in these Assemblies, are wholly Innocent in this matter.*

FINIS.